

VZCZCXYZ0023
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLGB #0990 2891437
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 161437Z OCT 06
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3353
INFO RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 1565
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 0763
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1467
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0131
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0631
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0151

UNCLAS KIGALI 000990

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [RW](#)

SUBJECT: RWANDA-UGANDA JOINT PERMANENT COMMISSION MEETING A
SUCCESS

¶1. (U) Summary. Ugandan and Rwandan officials held the seventh Joint Permanent Commission sessions in Kigali October 12-13. A communique pledged cooperation on a hosts of issues, including consular relations, defense, education and justice issues, crop and animal diseases, cross-border transport fees, and border immunization efforts. The two sides also signed separate MOUs on police cooperation, wildlife management and metrology. Various senior Rwandan officials publicly lauded the sessions and expressed the wish that Rwandan-Ugandan relations continue to improve. Ghana pledged to support Rwanda's East African Community (EAC) candidacy. End summary.

¶2. (U) Over the course of two days, the Permanent Joint Commission attendees (including senior ministers from both sides) examined a host of bilateral issues, from defense and justice to education, gender and refugee matters, including the sensitive issue of alleged detention of nationals by the neighboring nation's security forces. In that regard, the two sides reaffirmed the principle of consular access to their respective nationals should they be detained. The governments also signed separate agreements governing cross-border police cooperation, wildlife management, and metrology (the science of standards and measurements). In his opening statement, Ugandan Foreign Minister Kutesa pledged support for Rwanda's EAC application.

¶3. (SBU) The two-day sessions included a courtesy call October 13 on President Kagame by Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa and others in the GOU delegation. The jovial public face to this courtesy call matched the boisterous atmosphere of the Uganda National Day reception at the Ugandan Embassy the evening of October 12 (Note: Uganda National Day is October 9; the Ugandan Embassy delayed the celebration to accommodate the arrival of the GOU delegation from Kampala for the Commission sessions). At the National Day reception, Foreign Minister Kutesa teasingly (and perhaps inadvertently) referred to President Kagame as "President of Uganda," a mark of distinction returned in kind by Rwandan Foreign Minister Charles Murigande, who called President Museveni "President of....," hesitating to complete the official designation, to great laughter from the crowd.

¶4. (SBU) This seventh session of the Permanent Joint Commission comes on the heels of President Kagame's journey to Uganda to attend the September 30 golden jubilee celebrations at the Ntare School in the Mbare district of Uganda, a school attended by both Kagame and Museveni. With President Museveni in attendance, President Kagame praised the important role the school in particular and Ugandan

society in general played in nurturing a generation of Rwandan refugees, including himself, and called for closer ties with Uganda.

15. (SBU) Comment. While presidential and foreign ministry officials have told us that the holding of the Joint Commission sessions two weeks after Kagame's trip to the Ntare School was pure coincidence, the timing has been fortuitous. It appears a bit of a charm offensive is underway by the GOR, as Rwanda strives for a positive vote on its request to join the East African Community, and for a general relaxation of regional tensions, particularly with the DRC and Uganda. End Comment.

THURSTON